

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Southern Intertie Project  
Kenai Peninsula to Anchorage, Alaska  
September 2001**

**Lead Agency:** Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Cooperating Agencies:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Interior  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Defense

**Written comments on  
this DEIS should be  
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**ABSTRACT**

The Southern Intertie Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) describes the affected environment and environmental consequences of constructing and operating a new 138kV transmission line between the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage. The project is being proposed by the Intertie Participants Group (Applicant) in order to improve the overall Railbelt electrical system reliability and energy transfer capabilities between the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage. The primary federal action entails whether to approve the necessary permits to construct and operate the proposed project across federal lands administered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Applicant has filed for a right-of-way across federal lands on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (KNWR), a Conservation System Unit designated under the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will determine whether to issue a permit for regulated activities in waters of the United States; decisions made by the Rural Utilities Service determine whether or not to provide federal funding for the project.

Three alternatives were studied in detail: no action; the applicant's proposal of constructing a new 73-mile-long transmission line between the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage along the Enstar pipeline route, adjacent to the pipeline through the KNWR; and the alternative of constructing a new line between the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage along the Tesoro pipeline route. Non-transmission alternatives such as battery energy storage systems, demand side management, energy efficiency/conservation, wind generation, fuel cells, and increased spinning reserves were also evaluated.

Alternatives developed in this DEIS address the 14 key issues raised during scoping. These issues include:

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| ■ purpose and need                      | ■ biology                             |
| ■ urban and rural land use              | ■ cultural resources                  |
| ■ aviation safety                       | ■ right-of-way limitations            |
| ■ recreation and tourism                | ■ health and safety                   |
| ■ management plans                      | ■ avalanche hazards                   |
| ■ watershed management and soil erosion | ■ socioeconomics                      |
| ■ visual resources                      | ■ alternatives to the proposed action |